1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5

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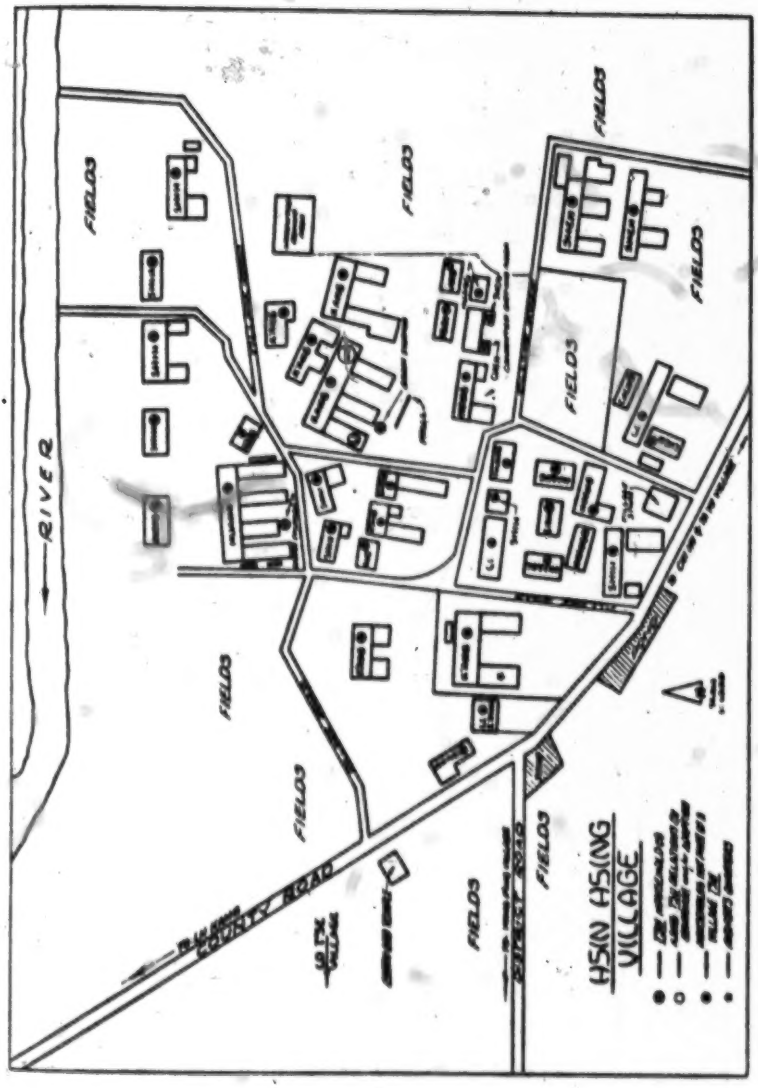

Map 2. Hsin Hsing village.

3: Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien
Taiwan AD6

Since much of its growth took place
633 during the fifty-odd years of Japanese administration, Taipei is
341 weighted down with ugly though solid Japanese colonial architecture,
179 studious imitations of public buildings in the British colonies. Current shoddy attempts at sinification make them even less attractive. In some of the more expensive residential neighborhoods there are still beautiful examples of Japanese domestic architecture hidden behind
633 high brick walls. These residential streets, many of them unpaved and
• 363 all bordered by open sewer ditches, are peaceful, the quiet disturbed
[463] only by an occasional car, a squeaking pedi-cab, and the varied, melodic calls of passing peddlers, knife-sharpeners, and shoe-repairers. At night the soft clack-clack of the blind masseur's bamboo rattle is as natural as a bird's song.

The streets in the business section of the city are anything but peaceful. The great clattering, rattling buses seem to have no springs and no speed limits; automobiles, mainly in the form of taxis or military jeeps, use horns more frequently than brakes. Sidewalks and roadways alike are clogged with bicycles, pedi-cabs, and pedestrians who reverse direction, cut across traffic, or come to a complete halt without warning or apparent reason. Cartloads of bricks and logs drawn by sweating, straining men or ambling yellow oxen use the same lanes as buses hurtling forward at forty miles an hour.

633 Beyond the hustling downtown districts that sell the essential
361 luxuries to the wealthy are the Taiwanese sections of the city, areas of
369 commerce and residence, often combined, that seem both flimsy and timeless. There is architecture here too, but it would take a coldly disciplined observer to look above the busy life in the shops and the streets to evaluate the style of the buildings. Here is the real texture of a Chinese city. There is poverty, but not the thin, sour smell of
633 poverty in American cities. Tiny shops sell cheap, shoddy cotton
444 goods, coarse household basketry, and thin metal pots and pans. The
[354] owners' wives squat in front, fanning portable stoves of clay and coal
[262] dust, cooking the evening meal of vegetables and pork fat or, depending upon the day's business, only vegetables. Customers step over and
[954] around the children sleeping or playing amid the merchandise and on
[855] the sidewalks; they bargain with the shopkeeper's wife while the baby tied on her back sleeps peacefully through their rising and falling
633 voices. Few cars attempt the narrow lanes but pedi-cabs and bicycles
[363] thread in and around the pedestrians with a grace and speed that often ends in a squealing of brakes and shouted oaths. In the few arcades or
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3:Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien
Taiwan AD6

and gaudy magazines. There is often an itinerant peddler or two during the afternoons, keeping up a steady stream of jokes and praise for his merchandise that would win approval from any sideshow barker. And evenings, particularly the warm, humid evenings of summer when houses are empty and life moves to the doorsteps and walkways, there are elaborate traveling medicine shows with magicians, or acrobats, or strongmen, or even modest operas. On those nights it is difficult to pass through the crowds, and the foreigner's white face isn't half as interesting as the antics going on under the bare electric light bulb that serves as the peddler's spotlight.

The remainder of the trip to Peihotien is on foot. There are always a few pedi-cabs by the station, but one ride in an aged pedi-cab down a rutted country path is sufficient to discourage a second. The walk across Tapu down its main street shouldn't take more than two or three minutes but it usually took me much longer. One side of the street is a roofed colonnade, protecting the shopper from the heat of the sun and the drenching of the rains. Here are the more substantial merchants of Tapu, the men who don't rent rickety stalls or push-carts but own or lease stores with sleeping rooms above or in the back for their families. Although there is a Western-style pharmacy in Tapu, as gaudy and cluttered as any American drug store, the old-fashioned Chinese medicine shop still does a better business. My husband often stopped there to talk with the druggist, an intelligent man who enjoys conversation, while I admired the rows of dignified crockery containers unsullied by advertising. Even on the hottest days the dim interior is cool and exotically fragrant. Next door is something that might be called a housewares store. From the open front to the dark, dusty back, the ceiling is festooned with the merchant's wares—bunches of brass tea kettles looking like giant clusters of pale grapes, chains of shallow, disc-shaped frying pans, strings of short-handled rice-stalk brooms, and ropes of household brushes. Stacked from floor to ceiling are baskets for straining, baskets for carrying, baskets for drying, baskets for fishing, baskets for storing. A shaky tower of pointed bamboo hats that serve the farmer as both umbrella and sunshade perch on an old wooden counter. Hanging from rusty nails are a collection of razor-sharp cleavers that function in the Chinese kitchen both as paring knife and butcher knife; there are dishes, cheap and easily broken; there are small tin cooking stoves that on careful examination prove to be ingeniously constructed of flattened beer